

PROPOSED BROADWAY TRAILHEAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
PUBLIC MEETING
Lew Sorensen Center, August 14, 2001, 6:30 p.m.

*NOTE: Meeting notes are posted on the NPS web site <http://www.nps.gov/sagu/pphtml/facts.html>
58 persons attended the 8/14/01 meeting, including agency officials.*

OVERVIEW

Review of progress from June and July meetings
Outline for the current meeting agenda
Ground rules established at 6/26/01 meeting

AGENDA

6:40 PM Project Goals/Objectives
6:55 PM Comments/questions/additions
7:10 PM Trailhead location discussion
7:30 PM Review graphic alternatives
8:25 PM Next meeting; Topics; Date

INTRODUCTIONS of planning team and other staff from NPS, BLM, and Pima County
Meg Weesner (NPS, Chief of Science and Resources Management, Bob Lineback (NPS, District Ranger), Tom Danton (NPS, Chief of Interpretation), Susan Early (NPS, Chief of Administration), Cate Bradley (NPS, Facilitator), Francisco Mendoza (BLM), Lorraine Buck (BLM, Public Information Officer), Tony Herrell (BLM, Assistant Field Manager, Tucson Field Office), Rafael Payan (Director, Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation), Jeff Weatherford (Pima County Transportation Dept.).

ISSUES identified at 6/14/01 meeting

*NOTE: * indicates issues that have been covered in the June or July meetings
+ Indicates issues that are to be covered during the 9/11/01 meeting
Remaining issues to be discussed in near future meetings*

- + Access
- + Equestrian needs
- + Parking
- * Process notification
- + Entrance
- Cost/benefit analysis
- Signage
- + Traffic
- + Trail network
- * Location
- * Safety
- * Goals & objectives (projects)
- Review public comments
- * Alternative site plans
- Environmental impacts
- Impacts on neighborhoods
- Define the problems that need to be addressed

HOW DECISION MAKING FOR THIS PROJECT WORKS:

Meg Weesner provided a decision process matrix, as a hand out, that most federal agencies are required to follow.

The decision process includes:
public scoping to identify needs and issues;

alternative proposal development,
agency analysis, and document preparation that results in an Environmental Assessment (EA) with 30 day public review;
agency analysis of public comments.

At that point the agency decides either to do more public scoping and the process may start over again with a new or revised EA. If the agency continues, it is decided whether the impacts of the project are significant. If the answer is yes, a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement is published in the Federal Register followed by more public scoping and review. If the answer is no, the agency prepares a Finding of No Significant Impact for the agency decision-maker's approval.

The NPS decision-maker for this project is the Regional Director, Karen Wade who is located at the Intermountain Region offices in Denver, CO. The Superintendent makes recommends for the project to the Regional Director. The BLM Field Office Director is the final decision-maker for that agency. Pima County requirements for public planning vary somewhat from federal land management requirements.

Public scoping meetings were held in 1999. 325 meeting notices were mailed out. The meetings were sparsely attended. Those meetings were designed to find out what the public issues were, regarding this project.

The public comments for this EA indicate that more scoping needed for this project. That is the purpose of this process. Results of this process will be analyzed according to public input and existing resource management information. The EA will be rewritten according to these findings and presented for a 30-day review and comment period. All interested parties on the park and the project mailing list will receive a copy of the EA.

OBJECTIVES reviewed from 6/14/01 meeting handout

- To provide safe access to the Cactus Forest Trail system for hikers, equestrians, and disabled users.
- To reduce conflicts between trailhead activities and road traffic.

[District Ranger Bob Lineback provided a handout - a summary of Broadway Area NPS Incidents 1997-June 2001. There were 72 incidents for a loss value of \$190,138. Incidents represented were: stolen vehicles, attempted suicide, motor vehicle accidents, drug and alcohol use, juvenile violations, gang activity, weapons violations (includes shooting into the desert), vandalism, disorderly conduct, destruction of natural features, sex offenses, horse accidents, illegal dumping, and speeding.]

- To reduce nighttime use and vandalism along the last mile of Broadway.
- To alleviate conflicts between trail use and access to private property and driveways, including the driveway to the BLM office.
- To minimize resource impacts and disturbance of new lands.
- To achieve the trail access goals of the Eastern Pima County Trail System Master Plan by providing a staging facility for users of the Wentworth Road and Broadway trail corridors.
- To provide for equestrian use on the BLM property, as suggested in the land exchange agreement when BLM acquired the property.

CONSTRAINTS (by which NPS park planning is guided)

- Consistent with the Park's General Management Plan - recommends improvements at most trailheads, including the Cactus Forest Trailhead on Broadway.

- Consistent with the Rincon Wilderness Management Plan - provide as much solitude and unconfined recreation as possible, recommended party size limits of 18 for people, 15 for stock.
- Consistent with the Cactus Forest Trails Plan - supportive of and consistent with the system of trails in the Cactus Forest.
- Comply with National Environmental Policy Act - public notification and review.
- Comply with the Endangered Species Act - especially consult with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure that the project complies with protection of habitat for the cactus ferruginous pygmy owl.
- Keep spending within allowable levels from a variety of funding sources.

PARTICIPANT Q & A

To reduce nighttime use on 1 mile of Broadway, you don't own this, what right do you have to restrict access or my right to assemble on public land?

To provide safe access for all users, is there a rule that all access must be accessible to disabled users? Provisions for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are another constraint for planning and design of this project.

What is the requirement for providing for equestrian use on BLM property? At the time of the land exchange, that is now the BLM office site, there was agreement that there would be equestrian access into the park. There was no strict interpretation of it, it was loose, just something to provide access to the park. Can it be a number of constituents served? That was what was negotiated at the time.

In reading through the materials sent out, one of the recommendations for horses was to use Wentworth and BLM land that seemed to be an appropriate consideration, and I don't see it on the list – there is already access for horses just off of Wentworth? Is that why that wasn't considered as an option for a trailhead site for horses, given BLM's interest in horses?

Incidents – do we really believe that if we put a gate up that we are not going to get the incidents listed? People will just go around. I think if you are going to refer to incidents and refer to the parking area as a barrier to it, nonsense, you don't need a barrier for it. Consider a barrier??

I'm interested to know comparison statistics for Speedway or Old Spanish Trail an all access sites compared to the Broadway site.

Looking at the number of NPS incidents – I want to know the number of visitors - using the incident reference sheet, what is the annual visitor use by year and what is the bulk of incident use? Break it down more to make it more meaningful.

Use at the park is not counted at each roadway and not for Broadway, so the statistics requested are not available because they do not exist. Instead, trail use measured by two methods – a line of site beam is used to count horse users, and sign-in sheets are used for hikers. However, not all users sign in. Numbers on the sign-in sheets are generally doubled it to get a statistical number of users. Recently, there have been several big incidents this year that have added to the statistics results, and the number of big incidents seems to be increasing.

One of the main reasons is to address the safety – very difficult to aggregate this, I'm surprised that you didn't have this data in order to justify what you are doing. If we had a better idea of

volume of incidents and costs, we'd have a better way of assessing before we establish the objectives re: horse users.

Suggest we go by incident and severity of incident to give better way to assess this.

Law enforcement issues are separate and different from trailhead improvement issues. Break out law enforcement issues from traffic and identify safety issues by type.

Can't tell where from list where the incidents took place – where is your jurisdiction – need comments from sheriffs, etc.

It was 4 months ago that I called and told of a shooting incident – you took care of it and called her back – comment danger – is it posted where it says “no shooting”? Yes, it says “No Weapons”.

It would be nice if they would address safety and the access impacts.

The Environmental Impact Statement issue is not clear. With all things being equal, if you don't foresee any problems with the EA recommendations, you don't file one? No, the Environmental Policy Act passed in 1969 directs all federal agencies to prepare an EIS for any project. The EA, a part of the EIS process, is to determine if there are significant impacts on the human environment. A full EIS is prepared upon the findings from and EA of significant impact.

Given the large number of people here, do you think that you will find a significant human impact? This is the realm of the decision makers.

Who will decide? The Superintendent recommends actions to the Regional Director of the Intermountain Region Karen Wade, Denver with advice of her environmental staff.

ALTERNATIVE TRAILHEAD SITE DISCUSSION

Bob Lineback and Francisco Mendoza led a discussion of trailhead locations. Participants were asked to consider what are the compelling reasons or motivations that support any or all of the proposed sites. And conversely, what, in your opinion, would be a fatal flaw with any or each of these locations? The intent of the exercise is to understand which of the proposed site alternatives needs a full-blown analysis.

There was a suggestion to look at a site approximately 1 mile south of Freeman where it would be for horses only – it's not on the list.

1.Existing Broadway (improve shoulders)

- Which driveways are still blocked?
- I walk everyday but have never have seen horse trailers parallel parked – it does not occur. Yes, there is some. I need to understand a little better – define what parallel parking means.
- Add asphalt.
- Explore mixed use parking (cars and horse trailers) – conflicts about this.
- Is there a history of equestrian/pedestrian accidents or problems? Conflict between the two? Is it a conflict or safety issue for each of them because they are on the road? Horses/cars/hikers seems to be what this conflict is about.
- Asphalt – if widening, you don't have to put it on the other side. CB – will get into this as a design issue.
- Environmental impact of shoulder expansion, improvement of existing shoulders.
- Change ordinance – rules of driving – so parking on shoulders would be legal; speed limit.

2. Broadway Trailhead (off-street parking)

- Is this #6 but off Broadway? It wasn't designed, but will it be some type of design? What is strategic in order to make a compelling argument for this? Would you say it is fatally flawed?
- Spending a lot of money
- Clearing a lot of desert
- Whole proposal – asphalt
- Drawing in more people to stay longer because of toilets, posts, ramadas, congestion and increased use
- Design – visit limitations

3. Freeman/Broadway junction (NPS lands)

- Disturbance in the park
- Moves activity into more populated area – vandalism, etc.
- Still allows access by the public to the end of Broadway
- No trails there. – 1/3 mile to nearest trail.

4. BLM/Freeman (NW corner) - DELETE FROM CONSIDERATION (SEE BELOW)

- Would have to take the shuttle from there – too far.
- Freeman Road is deadly

5. Broadway/Codorniz (NE corner) - DELETE FROM CONSIDERATION (SEE BELOW)

- Would have to get from BLM land to trail – difference of connections to trails, crossing Broadway, etc.

6. East end of Broadway

- No fence, a person would see improvements instead of mountains
- Least disturbance to park land
- Higher safety level – is safer – access to park immediately and trail access is already there and can hook up to existing trails network without making more
- Less safe for neighborhood
- Limits horse parking to 8 spaces
- Close proximity of multiple uses
- Best location because it is safe but so much damage because of going through fence – disturbs the least amount of vegetation
- Buffer zone between “bad guys” who won't go there – patrols, etc.
- Displaces activity somewhere else
- Plus and minus to dispersement issue
- Boundaries constrain the safety of the space – design issue too – boundaries could change?
- Positive – negative – other feels safer since gate on Wentworth went up
- Asphalt island

7. No action/no change

- People favored this one
- No action may create future problems
- What not done today will have to be done tomorrow
- Can't verify if are safety issues (safety issues uncertain)
- User conflicts
- Safety problems
- Maintaining horse trailer (and any) parking as it is; however, it is illegal to park within 12 feet of a roadway
- Maintains natural environment
- Not enough room for everything that is going to be happening as growth occurs in this area

8. Wentworth ¼ mile in (gated section)

- Disturbance of the land
- More impact to the neighborhood

- Increasing traffic
- Separating horses from cars

9. Equestrian parking 1 mile south of Broadway and Freeman (built into the park)

- No one would hear the activity
- Environmental impacts
- Improved safety
- Separates the uses
- Safety concerns
- Access to trails
- Much less impact to Notch Neighborhood
- More impact on the other neighborhood
- Existing entrance for hikers on Broadway
- Traffic access for horse trailers onto Freeman
- Cost issue of two separate places

Could you send us all the sites considered with all info and all comments from tonight to take into design phase next meeting? Can we get copy of 14 plans to review before next meeting? Yes (design proposals packet were distributed at the meeting).

Keep all but 4 and 5 – consensus by voice.

All attending agreed to take the packet of proposed designs, along with notes from ALTERNATE TRAILHEAD SITE DISCUSSION (above), and review them so when we come together at the next meeting we can move forward with the process and discussion of critical design criteria. It was suggested that the design proposals be reviewed for design components and considerations for users, without regard for the proposed site of the design. The concept is that the user needs will be very similar at any location.

Are we limited to size for each area?

MW - The design needs to be for an EA limited impact and size to avoid disturbance but we accept that we can possibly expand the area but it will have more impacts. Limiting size causes conflicts about adequate or inadequate space/area.

Topography issues?

Can we tag areas to say we have this much space to work with? CB - As a guide you can use existing EA and use approx acreage.

It was suggested to use 30 cars and 20 trailers (as a rule of thumb) and to draw from your experience and knowledge to use these figures as you consider the design criteria. It is a critical time to "speak for" user needs.

Is there an intention to reduce the number of trailers? As a result of input from this process, the Superintendent believes that 8 trailer parking spaces is too low, but there is no decision as to what is the right number. This process will help inform what is the correct number.

It was requested that information about topography be provided at the next meeting. Francisco will try to map out the areas by next time for the groups' information.

It was agreed that the next meeting will be held on September 11 at 6:30 p.m. at the Lew Sorensen Center. And agenda items will include:

- Review comments on site locations first
- Do design review
- Existing problems
- Traffic & law enforcement list of problems